



News Release

WEST VIRGINIA DISTRICT

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SBIR Road Tour Stops in Morgantown, WV

Tuesday, July 19, 2016

MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA — The SBIR Road Tour stops in Morgantown, WV Tuesday, July 19, 2016 at the WVU Media Innovation Center. West Virginia innovators, entrepreneurs, and technology-centric small businesses who want to learn more about the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program are invited to attend the daylong event. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) coordinates the SBIR program and this is the second consecutive year resource partners have worked to bring the Road Tour to the Mountain State.

The SBIR program is a highly competitive program that encourages small businesses to engage in Federal Research/Research and Development (R/R&D) that has the potential for commercialization. Through a competitive awards-based program, SBIR enables small businesses to explore their technological potential and provides the incentive to profit from its commercialization.

The SBIR program was created to support scientific excellence and technological innovation through the investment of federal research funds in critical American priorities to build a strong national economy. Approximately, \$2.5 billion is awarded through the program each year with each agency administering its own individual program within the guidelines established by Congress.

SBIR and STTR grants allow businesses to conduct feasibility studies in Phase I (up to \$150,000) and development of a prototype in Phase II (up to \$1,000,000) for eventual commercialization in Phase III using non-federal dollars. Eleven federal agencies participate in the SBIR Program and five participate in the STTR Program.

The Morgantown SBIR Road Tour Stop hosts several of those participating federal agencies, including: National Institute of Health (NIH), Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Commerce -National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST); the Department of Energy (DOE); Department of Homeland Security (DHS); Department of Defense – US Navy (USN); Department of Defense – US Air Force (USAF); Department of Defense – Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), National Science Foundation, US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), and SBA. Representatives from these agencies will be on hand to talk one-on-one with individuals about their research goals for the coming year.

During the event, participants hear from Brian Joseph, president of West Virginia small business, Touchstone Research Laboratory, Ltd. Touchstone has achieved success utilizing an SBIR grant to develop carbon foam to build walls for Navy ships. The product, CFOAM® carbon foam is a structural material made from coal and is lightweight, fireproof, and impact absorbing. [Click here](#) to read more about Touchstone Research Laboratory.

“This event is a great one-stop-shop opportunity for innovators and entrepreneurs to learn more about the SBIR program,” states SBA’s West Virginia District Director, Karen Friel. “We hear of SBIR grantee success stories, like Sonicare toothbrush and LASIK technology, but we have a real success story here in West Virginia to learn from with Touchstone Research Laboratory.”

This national event is being facilitated in West Virginia by a group of local co-sponsors, including: SBA's West Virginia District Office, TechConnect West Virginia, the WV High Technology Foundation/INNOVA, WV Small Business

Development Center, WV SCORE, WV Regional Technology Park, Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing, Chemical Alliance Zone, Marshall University, West Virginia University, and Charleston Area Alliance.

“Firms across the country are accessing thousands of dollars through the SBIR program, resulting in important research that can be converted into new products, technologies, and services while also creating jobs,” states TechConnect West Virginia executive director, Anne Barth. “Our state is in a transition period and we need all the help we can get, I encourage all small businesses interested in federal research and development to come learn the ins and outs of the SBIR grant program.”

The WVU Media Center is located in Morgantown on the 4th floor of the Evansdale Crossing Building at 62 Morrill Way. Registration and continental breakfast start at 7:30 a.m., the event kicks off at 8:30 a.m. and the day concludes at 3:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required. There is a \$30 fee to attend and includes lunch. Students receive a discounted registration fee of \$15 with code STUDENT. Visit <http://bit.ly/SBIR-WV> for more information and to register for the event.

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Reasonable arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Contact: Kimberly Donahue, West Virginia District Office, Charleston Branch Office 405 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301, (304) 347-5220, kimberly.donahue@sba.gov